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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6103  
INFO RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0421  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0130  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 7111  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 5206  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 3770  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 0990  
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 3842  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 2921  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI PRIORITY 7697  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI PRIORITY 5376  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2064  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 COLOMBO 000746

SIPDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (CLASSIFICATION CHANGED)

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS  
MCC FOR D NASSIRY AND E BURKE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/12/2017  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [MOPS](#) [PREL](#) [CE](#)  
SUBJECT: SRI LANKA: EMINENT PERSON DEVELOPS EYEWITNESS  
TESTIMONY ON TRINCOMALEE KILLINGS

REF: A. COLOMBO 742

- [1](#)B. COLOMBO 563
- [1](#)C. COLOMBO 525
- [1](#)D. COLOMBO 511
- [1](#)E. COLOMBO 402
- [1](#)F. COLOMBO 290 AND PREVIOUS

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Classified By: Ambassador Robert O. Blake, Jr., for reasons 1.4(b,d).

[1](#)1. (S) SUMMARY: In a May 21 meeting, U.S.-funded International Independent Group of Eminent Persons (IIGEP) Assistant David Savage told PolOff that a witness to the January 2006 killing of 5 youths in Trincomalee approached the United Kingdom's Eminent Person (EP) Sir Nigel Rodley in the UK with new information about the case. This witness, a doctor from Trincomalee, is the father of one of the young men that was killed. The witness claims that the Sri Lankan military and Special Task Force (STF) were involved in the incident and that he can identify the officers involved. In addition, there are disturbing links between the Trincomalee case and the Muttur case involving the killing of 17 Action Against Hunger workers. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (S) In a May 21 meeting, U.S.-funded IIGEP Assistant David Savage told PolOff that a witness to the January 2006 killing of 5 youths in Trincomalee approached the United Kingdom's EP Sir Nigel Rodley in the UK with new information about the case. This witness, a doctor from Trincomalee, is the father of one of the young men that was killed. He left Sri Lanka shortly after the killing and is currently residing in the UK.

[1](#)3. (S) According to the witness, on the day of the incident, five young men were gathered near the beach, in

front of a statue located near a "T" intersection. About 500 meters north of the intersection is Fort Frederick, a military facility. About 25 meters away to the south and west are army checkpoints. Across the road to the east is the beach. A trishaw (three-wheeled taxi) driver passed through the western checkpoint, approached the men, and tossed a grenade at them. He then and drove up to and entered the Fort. Some, but not all, of the young men were killed by the grenade. One of the men, who was only injured, used his mobile phone to call his father (the witness). The father lived only a few hundred meters away and ran toward the scene, remaining on the phone with his son. He was stopped by officers at the southern checkpoint. A group of STF officers passed through the western checkpoint, dragged the young men across the road behind some trees and shot them. The father was only about 25 meters away at this point, but could not see his son because of the trees. He claims he heard the order being given over the radio to shoot the young men and he has identified the Special Task Force officer that gave the order. He can also identify the army officers at the checkpoints that day. Those officers would have been able to see and hear most, if not all, of the incident. He said he spoke to a second trishaw driver who claimed that he saw the first trishaw driver toss the grenade and continue to the Fort. That second trishaw driver, however, died within 48 hours of the incident. (Savage did not disclose the cause of death, but implied that it was suspicious.)

14. (S) There are alarming links between the Trincomalee case and the Muttur case involving the killing of 17 Action Against Hunger workers. The STF officer identified by this witness as ordering the deaths of the 5 young men is currently the Chief Investigator for the case in Muttur. Moreover, one of the victims in the Muttur case was the brother of one of the victims in the Trincomalee case.

15. (S) COMMENT: Despite the somewhat sluggish start of the Commission of Inquiry (CoI) and the IIGEP, evidence in these

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cases is beginning to come to light. IIGEP is aware of other witnesses who have left Sri Lanka, and who may have similar information to share. Many of the key witnesses to these cases may in fact be overseas, since some of the victims have been from wealthy or influential families with the means to leave the country. While it is unlikely the Commission itself is aware at present of the existence of this witness or his evidence, the CoI has given a mandate to the Eminent Persons to collect such testimony on its behalf abroad (ref a). It is therefore probable that such testimony will eventually feed into the CoI process.

BLAKE